

# TDMHDD Update

## HUD Honors Housing Office, Fair Housing Council

The Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities' Office of Housing Planning and Development (OHPD) and the Tennessee Fair Housing Council were recently honored with a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Best Practice award for their partnership in promoting fair housing for people with mental illness and co-occurring disorders.

The two agencies were among 14 others across the nation whose projects were highlighted for their innovation and effectiveness. The Council is a private, non-profit organization whose mission is to combat housing discrimination in Tennessee.

A national committee that included leaders and experts from the housing industry, public interest groups and non-profit fair housing agencies selected the 14 Best Practice Award recipients. Applicants were selected based on how well their projects reach underserved communities and how easily their projects can be replicated.

Virginia Trotter Betts, Commissioner of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, said that affordable housing is a dream of all Americans, including individuals who have a mental illness.

"The Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities is committed to the goal of recovery and

we believe that safe housing is one of the essential fundamentals to a recovery process," Betts said. "Receiving this highly competitive award affirms a national recognition of Tennessee's efforts and vision."

The Tennessee partnership involves educating the general public about the fair housing rights of people with mental illness and other disabilities to live in residential neighborhoods, whether individually or in groups sharing a household. The partnership supports the department's Creating Homes Initiative, a project that began in 2001 with the goal of developing 2005 new, permanent housing units for people with mental illness by 2005. The goal was surpassed in late 2002 and another goal of 2005 units has been set.



## Clinical Research and Publications

On a regular basis, the TDMHDD's Office of the Medical Director (OMD) writes and publishes an article in Tennessee Medicine, the journal of the Tennessee Medical Association.

The OMD, also, makes periodic contributions to several other publications such as the:

- American Journal of Health-Systems Pharmacy;
- American Association of Psychiatric Administrators; and
- Southern Journal of Law and Medicine

To review these articles, please go to:  
<http://www.state.tn.us/mental/omd/omdresearch.html>

## Happenings

### Prakash Named Scientific Advisor

Rudra Prakash, MD, has been named as the Scientific Advisor for the Mental Health Association of Middle TN's Partnership with the National Institute of Mental Health.



This partnership which is called The Constituency Outreach and Education Program is a nationwide communications initiative of the National Institute of Mental Health ( NIMH ) that enlists State and national organizations in a partnership to help close the gap between mental health research and practice and reduce the stigma of mental illness.

Dr. Prakash is a consulting psychiatrist and Clinical Director at Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute (MTMHI) and Metro Downtown Clinic, past President of the Tennessee Psychiatric Association and attending physician at Vanderbilt.

### WMHI Honors Nurses with Week of Activities

Western Mental Health Institute held a series of special events, this Spring, to honor their hard-working, dedicated nurses.

Members of the nursing staff received breakfast on Monday, flowers and ice cream sundaes on Tuesday, a "Hawaiian Beach Day" luncheon on Wednesday, and drawings for a manicure/pedicure and a "show your heart hidden treasures" gift give-away on Thursday. The week culminated with a live radio broadcast by WOJG, 94.7 from the Chapel grounds and presentations of nursing pins.

### Swinford Selected for the TGEI Class of 2003

Joe Swinford, Director of the Office of Consumer Affairs with the TDMHDD, was one of 30 executives selected to participate in the Tennessee Government Executive Institute (TGEI) Class of 2003.



Established in 1983, the TGEI program consists of three one-week sessions held over a three-month period offering Tennessee State senior executives the opportunity to broaden their knowledge and perspectives of leadership principles and practices.

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